

24

AARON WILDAVSKY

---

June 14 1978

Professor Joshua Lederberg  
Department of Genetics  
School of Medicine  
Stanford University  
Stanford  
California 94305

Dear Joshua,

There is a rational answer and a historical one. As usual the truth is historical. I came to health policy unburdened by any prior acquaintance. I had been asked to explain the increase in medical costs but I soon concluded this was well known. Indeed, the medical literature was unlike any I had read in social science in that there was a mountain of splendid material. Coming to grips with this material, somehow simplifying it, I discovered was a major roadblock to thinking. So I made it my task not to invent anything new, but to make what was already known simpler and more vivid. Soon I realized that if I took notes I would end up using them and that this would run directly counter to my purpose. I did not want to produce a rambling book. In a word I took no notes and wrote the enclosed paper. I did read a variety of material that included various estimates and made my own judgement. It could have been 20% or 30%, but it would not have been higher by any authority I consulted, only, alas, I cannot remember which. No doubt many have wondered, but you are the first to ask.

Sincerely,

Aaron Wildavsky 

Enc.

From May 1st to August 31, 1978

Aaron Wildavsky can be reached at

Room 464  
230 Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017  
(212) 949-8195, 8196

or (indefinitely) at home

227 Clinton Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(212) 625-5312

*Daedalus*